5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
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CHAPTER VII

PIGS

1. *Introduction*

262 574 431 While taro exchanges serve to maintain the basic social network used in transactions, the pig is the most common object of mediation in critical situations. Unlike taro, pig is not consumed as part of the ordinary diet, but is commonly described as a 'feasting food'. As feasts are held only to mark a crisis in social relations, it will be our task to investigate what makes pig meat specially [146] suitable as a feasting food. One may, at the outset, answer this question with a remark about the physiological properties of pig meat: as the Orokaiva diet normally includes little first-class protein, any meal at which meat is served may be expected to have a specially invigorating and exhilarating effect. But in the present inquiry it does not suffice to give physiological explanations: our problem is to discover how the exhilarating experience of eating meat becomes symbolic and how it is magically utilised in the managing of social crises.

Pig meat is used both for the restoration of good relations after a quarrel or estrangement and for the establishment of new social relations. As such it serves [773] a function in widening the social network. This function is hinted at in the basic pig myth about Totoima to which reference has been made earlier. When Totoima was killed, the joints cut from his body were distributed far and wide and caused all those groups who shared in it to multiply rapidly. This sharing may thus be regarded as a kind of communion which implies both social relations and the conferment of a blessing. Both these themes are strongly present in all ceremonies where pig meat is shared.

431 But there is a second theme as well: there is in every gift of pig meat the notion of a reparation, either for past services rendered or for past injuries suffered, even though these injuries on some occasions may amount to no more [773] than the lapsing of social contact. The Totoima of the myth, of course, was guilty of many murders and his death was an occasion for dispelling many grievances. Thus the gift of pig meat implies not only a communion but also an expiation.

431 825 In treating pig as an object of mediation in exchange, I shall need to demonstrate specifically that in certain respects a gift of pig resembles a sacrifice. It must be shown that the offerer identifies with the pig that is given away or sacrificed, and that there is a belief in the 'virtue' or magical power of the sacrifice both in establishing a social link between sacrificer and human beneficiary and in strengthening the spiritual state of the sacrificer himself.

[571] [789] The data show that pig sacrifices may be regarded equally well as rites of communion and as rites of expiation. The key to their significance, however,

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824 partners, while objects of mediation are not imaginary and magical, but have a real 772 existence. I shall deal with these two aspects in turn.

3. *Coconut as an Object of Mediation*

824 Coconut has several culinary uses: it is eaten raw; soup is made of the flesh; the [252] squeezed flesh produces coconut cream in which taro and delicacies such as river [262] crabs may be cooked. Young coconuts are cut open at the top and used for a [272] refreshing drink. Coconut is reserved for two kinds of everyday food gift: [431] cooked dishes offered to guests and young coconut offered to visitors on arrival. Waddell's figures for coconut transactions are surprisingly low (less than 1 lb. per week disposed of in an average household). In Inonda, where the climate favours the coconut, there has been sporadic commercial exploitation of the nut.

[574] Coconuts are also a feasting food. At ordinary harvest feasts and bridewealth payments they are seen on display platforms along with taro and other [262] vegetables. Williams (1930: 44) reports that they used to be placed under a taboo when a large feast was pending. I have already mentioned that at mortuary [764] feasts they are the principal object of mediation between the plant emblem group of the deceased and the village which has provided services to the deceased at the time of death (See Williams 1930: 223–6). I saw a variant of this ceremony at Hohorita in 1967. The plant emblem groups of the deceased couple provided massive gifts displayed on a platform: feast taro, tins of fish, cartons of flour, corned beef in tins, sugar-cane, pots of cooked vegetable food, small bags of salt, smoked meat, a dead pig suspended from a stick, rice, bread, an abundance of betelnut and carved taro suspended from horizontal poles placed above the platform, while at least 1000 lbs. of coconuts, strung to poles supporting each other diagonally, were seen everywhere among the other gifts.

[262] Coconut is correctly believed to be a valuable adjunct to children's diet, as it [146] provides first-class protein. The belief is explained by Orokaiva in a myth quoted by Williams (1928: 122) according to which the first child ever to eat a coconut grew miraculously overnight. Children do eat a good deal of it and it is also fed [231] regularly to dogs and chickens. Orokaiva also regard the effects of coconuts on [235] dogs as miraculous. As neither dogs nor children have any other substantial supply of first-class protein, the coconut relieves a very real diet deficiency. Whatever religious significance is given to the coconut is related to this.

824 Coconut oil is used as a cosmetic for hair and body, not only to enhance 778 beauty but also for its magical efficacy. In a ritual performed over a man-slayer, a coconut was broken over his head as a purificatory and 'defensive' device in [302] the sense that the fluid would drive away dangerous spirits (1930: 175). With [789] the same end in view, the bodies of female initiands and certain ornaments worn at dances are rubbed with coconut oil (1930: 207). It would appear, in view of [881] this evidence, that the coconut is in general identified with *ivo* communicated by the dead to the living. The coconuts of a dead leader are thought to contain his *ivo* in a form which is communicable, not to his kinsmen to whom these [761] coconuts are taboo, but particularly to his affines. The quoted ritual uses of the coconut are all associated with some contact with the world of death, i.e. critical situations in which the living have been in contact with death and need the help [764] of the dead to obtain *ivo*. While this *ivo* is communicated, through the mediation

423 [224] [226] The only local hunting land held by Sivepa people is that held by individuals as gardening land. A villager may hunt or fish on the land held by members of any group in the village and in fact often strays further afield than this 'village land' without attracting the attention of other groups. A man may, without consulting others, invite a kinsman from another village to hunt or join in a fish drive with him but no hunting parties involve the assembly or co-operation of larger groups. A man wishing to hunt on the land of one of his kinsmen in another village would consult his kinsman first.

d. Livestock

235 [231] Apart from the game available to the hunter, there are only 2 sources of fresh meat available, the domestic pig and fowl. Six householders own a total of 15 fowls which were either bred or bought by their owner. They are valued mainly as an asset for times of feasting and only to a limited extent for egg production. They are allowed to run loose in the village during the day but are enclosed in shelters at night for protection against dogs.

231 [241] Like fowls, pigs are fed by women mainly on scraps but they find much of their food by roaming in the bush and grazing in old gardens. They have complete freedom of movement within or outside the village during the day and in some instances only are they housed in pens during the night. As a result, they are a constant threat to gardens which are not thoroughly fenced; their movements are a frequent source of dispute and require the gardener to exercise care in siting his garden and sometimes to devote considerable time waiting there to attack a pig which has been frequenting the area.

[431] [426] Of the 24 pigs or piglets claimed by 7 of the 12 householders, 15 were bred by them and the rest received in gift exchanges; none was inherited. The only longstanding debts admitted or claimed by members of the sample were in terms of pigs.

[146] There is little animal protein in the villagers' diet; some fresh meat and smoked meat or fish is purchased at Saiho market or from vendors travelling to the market - this source of meat seems to be quickly becoming reasonably accessible (E. Waddell: personal communication), but wild pigs - a very important source in many other Orokaiva areas - are rare and the area for hunting restricted. It would be feasible to take steps to modify any lack of animal protein by increasing stock numbers and improving their quality, but this would involve the introduction of new strains and, to maintain any increase or improvements, husbandry techniques would need to be refined.[1] At present parasites take

[657] [1] About 50 Berkshire boars were distributed to Village Constables among the groups affected by the Mt Lamington eruption.

454 worthwhile way in which they can invest their money or, three, a general inability of the people to handle their money effectively. An analysis of the pattern of expenditure on commodities (which account for 55 per cent of total expenditure) throws some light on the problem since, in this area, the people themselves initiate the act rather than any other institution.

511 Food and stimulants account for 62 per cent of the expenditure on commodities (see Table 10:12). In a predominately subsistence economy such purchases are generally considered to be of a luxury nature and superfluous to basic requirements. This view cannot be substantiated on the basis of the Sivepa evidence. Sixty-three per cent of rice purchases, the single most important item, are made during July, August and September - the latter part of the dry season - when there is a serious shortage of cultivated foods. The consumption of tinned meat and fish compensate, to some extent, for the inadequate protein content in the subsistence diet. Similarly, purchases of subsistence produce are restricted to the locally scarce resources of fish and meat, together with lime which is eaten with areca. Other foodstuffs include biscuits, bread, sugar and salt and only certain of these can be treated as purely luxury purchases. The other important commodities purchased are clothing and household goods (principally cooking utensils). Both are now essential elements in the material culture, having displaced their traditional counterparts.

438 In comparing the purchasing patterns of cash and non-cash croppers
431 (and therefore of high and low income households) a clearer pattern
511 of priorities emerges. Among the latter clothing is the most important commodity purchased, followed by rice, meat and fish, and household goods. Together these account for 72 per cent of all purchases. The range of purchases of cash croppers is more widely distributed, the above commodities accounting for only 50 per cent of the total. Thirteen per cent of their expenditure is on goods used in hunting - cartridges, torches, batteries and bulbs - and it is in this activity particularly that their larger incomes are of direct significance in effecting a technological advance and increasing productivity. Their more substantial purchases of rice can be viewed in a similar light - reducing their need to make sago, so enabling them to continue their cash cropping activities through the dry season.

In general purchasing patterns can be readily understood in terms of the requirements of the village economy. Expenditure is largely restricted to goods which have displaced their traditional counterparts or which compensate for seasonal food shortages and there is little evidence of extravagance.

Chapter 13

Rural productivity and capital formation

It has been demonstrated that, among the men at least, there is a significant amount of untilised labour time available and that, although the Orokaiva are evidently committed to the cash economy, individual involvement is marginal. In particular, the commercial production of agricultural crops is poorly developed. Since this is the one form of enterprise which would appear the least disruptive of the subsistence routine and which exploits the available resources of land, labour and customary skills some explanation is required.

Although no direct evidence is available, Orokaiva diet, like that of many New Guinea societies, is probably adequate in calories but deficient in protein content. The ability of adults to undergo sustained periods of hard work, either in employment or in such subsistence tasks as sago-making, suggests that diet does not impose serious limitations on their productive capacity. It is worth noting, however, that there is a marked falling off in the level of activity in Sivepe during the dry season at a time when the diet, heavily reliant on sago, is least satisfactory. Moreover, this coincides with the coffee flush.

Both villages have access to more agricultural land than is required for subsistence. Crocombe and Hogbin (1963:10) estimate that, at Inonda, there are 580 acres of 'good gardening land available', of which only 127 acres are presently required. Rimoldi (1966:20-1) estimates the Sivepe sample's requirements to be 110 acres out of an available area of 138 acres, all of which is considered suitable for cultivation. In the former village only about 5 acres are under commercial crops (coffee, coconuts and cocos) and 4.6 acres in the latter (coffee and rubber). Accessibility may be important in the failure to plant additional areas under cash crops. The preference for establishing such plantings close to the village at Sivepe, where the initial processing is carried out, has already been noted.[1] In the case of Inonda the degree of commercialisation is influenced

[1] See pp.110-11. A
A,[See Category 361, pp. 110-111--Analyst]

CHAPTER V: Disease

Section 1: The Community as a Carrier of Disease

164 Data on Orokaiva health are sparse due to the absence of medical research. Some of the picture may be seen from the table of 1966 hospital admissions of St. Margaret's Hospital, Eroro (Table 11).[A] The figures for serious illness over the whole of the Northern District, are of course far higher than these figures indicate as only a fraction of cases of illness come to the notice of the hospital. It is estimated at 90% of the population is infected with malaria while filiariasis, gastro-enteritis, influenza, scabies and other skin diseases are also [146] extremely common. Some rough studies of Orokaiva diet, carried out under the auspices of Saiho hospital, seem to indicate that malnutrition plays only a minor role as the cause of Orokaiva disease, and patients admitted to hospital rarely have diseases caused by [165] malnutrition. Malaria causes many deaths among children, including [753] one in Sivepe during the time of my stay. People are extremely anxious about disease, even mild attacks of influenza or of malarial fever. [754] The cause was always thought to be sorcery.

Section 2: The Community as the Victim of Unfamiliar Disease

164 No unusual incidence of disease was noticed in the evacuation
731 camps, except for infections due to bad water supply at Cape Killerton camp which was evacuated after a week. Dr. Gunther noted some spinal meningitis and paratyphoid as "the result of close living together in camp." Some old people died, as informants told me, due to grief and loss of the will to live after the disaster.

Section 3: Community's Perception of New Location as Healthy or Unhealthy

753 The inhabitants of Ilimo camp were not particularly concerned
731 about health dangers in their new location. Ilimo was not far away from their own territory; villages such as Sivepe had had at least some friendly contact there and their fears were concentrated more on the safety of some of their kinsmen and the threat to the land and possessions they had left behind. It was different for the Sangara and Isivita people who were encamped in the Oro Bay area, in the midst

A [See Cat. 116, p. 216--Analyst]

755 medicine, though by no means always. Bandages were especially popular;
they were worn as status symbols and as dancing ornaments. Nurses and
752 physicians are regarded with affection; any person who obviously wants
to be helpful would be treated thus, and it has of course been noticed
554 that they relieve a great deal of discomfort even though Western
theories of the causation of disease are treated sceptically and mostly
753 explained away because the nurses and physicians usually do not under-
stand the fine points of sorcery; only the Orokaiva have this knowledge.

Data on the eruption period do not suggest that the attitude
731 to medicine was different then to what it is today. There were,
743 however, fewer facilities: the hospitals were smaller, there was
less available transport to reach them with, the chain of aid posts
built by the Higaturu Council did not yet exist, so that outside the
government hospital, the only facilities were the mission stations.

The evacuation camps provided a good opportunity to put a
744 public health programme into operation, and this opportunity was taken.
No regular anti-malarial preventive treatment was given because this
clearly could not have been continued after the camps were closed--
and it was feared that anti-malarials might lower natural resistance.
On the other hand, everyone at Ilimo was given prophylactic treatment
against hookworm. Unfortunately, this medicine had the effect of
"making people feel a little drunk." One man, the sole male survivor
of a large family killed during the eruption, went berserk through the
medicine and caused a near riot. Mr. Kaad then abandoned his campaign
against hookworm at Ilimo, reviving it later, in the Saiho period.
Prophylactic treatment against hookworm has not been continued because
reinfection constantly occurs. The camps provided a practical object
lesson on the Western ideas of treating waste matters, sanitation and
water supplies, a lesson which no doubt bore fruit some years later,
when the Higaturu Council had money and an ideological base for bringing
[242] about such innovations. Finally, the introduction of sweet potatoes
at Ilimo, by means of distribution of sample tubers and seeds and the
[146] teaching of methods of cultivation, had a definite public health
objective: it was done because the yellow and red varieties of sweet
potato are particularly rich in vitamins in which Orokaiva diet is
supposed to be often deficient. Today, some of this sweet potato is
grown in Sivepa, though on a small scale, while plantings in Inonda
are somewhat more extensive. (The sweet potatoes resist drought better
than taro.)

The most active public health programmes I saw in 1966-67
were directed at: malaria control, infant health, village hygiene.
The key figure in public health improvement at Sivepa was the health
inspector employed by the Higaturu Council. This man was expected to
cover the whole of the Council area, and spent much of his time
touring villages. As his home was at Garombi and he had many relatives
in Sivepa, he made frequent visits. Sivepa caused him little trouble,
he told me, as waste matter was thrown into deep holes, everyone had
a levatory and the place was kept clean in the prescribed way. On

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the dead person. At ordinary harvest feasts and bride-wealth payments they are seen on display platforms along with taro and other vegetables. They are then subsidiary to taro and pigs, which are the main food gifts, but at mortuary feasts vast quantities are given, saved from the dead man's palms, which are made taboo until this feast. Dry coconut and areca are strewn on graves by affines of the deceased.

The distinctive features perceived by Orokaiva in each species should also be summarized. Coconut is believed to be a valuable adjunct to the diet of children and dogs (also chickens). In Orokaiva myths, its miraculous effect on children and dogs is often described. To the scientific observer this effect is natural enough as coconut is an important source of first-class protein for both children and dogs, who otherwise do not get much first-class protein. Coconut oil is used as a cosmetic for hair and body not only to enhance beauty but also for its magical efficacy, for the purification of man-slayers (Williams, 1930: 175, 207), and for women who are being initiated or who welcome visitors at dances. In all such cases it is the task of a male to pour the coconut milk over the persons whose magical protection is intended.

Areca, a mildly hallucinogenic fruit, is chewed by women as much as by men. When friends are sitting together, it is shared in much the same way as beer among white Australians. People offer nuts to each other but expect to come out approximately even. Visitors from other villages expect to be offered areca by their hosts. Its main physiological effect is to create a dreamy amiability and to break down hostility that might otherwise exist. Its magical uses, mostly in association with some medicine of more specific purpose, are too many to enumerate. A girl carries a bunch of areca at the ceremony which ends her seclusion after first menstruation. She normally offers it to her man at lovers' meetings.

Although I have a number of coconut and areca myths on record, I shall discuss here only one, the fullest one, which illustrates my argument most clearly. A beautiful girl, noted for her remarkable breasts, had the misfortune of killing all the young men with whom she slept. Her breasts pricked and killed them.